

Claudelle Naidoo on being consistent, collaborative and measurable as a great leader

By  Juanita Pienaar

13 Aug 2019

Claudelle Naidoo epitomises what it means to be a strong woman. Not only is she the newly appointed MD of MediaCom SA, but also a mother of two and a Lupus fighter.

Naidoo [was appointed](#) as MediaCom SA's new MD earlier this year and, with her, she brought a depth of experience in managing large accounts and portfolios. As well as knowledge and understanding of the South African and African landscape, which are essential in enhancing, innovating and improving client experiences. Apart from her local background, she has also spent almost two decades of her career working across the continent in the [research and insights space](#).

"The industry is constantly evolving. More than ever before, our clients require expert opinions and advice in order to achieve performance levels and business goals. My vision is to take our clients' businesses to the next level, unlock opportunities and, most importantly, enable them to make the right business decisions through our partnership," says Naidoo.



Claudelle Naidoo, the newly appointed MD of MediaCom SA. Image supplied. 



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Here she tells us more about her new role, the challenges she's faced as a woman in the industry and her career highlights.

■ ***In May you were appointed as MediaCom SA's new MD. What has the experience been like so far?***

It has been absolutely out of this world! I have had the privilege of working more closely with our clients, media partners and the business. The experience, so far, has broadened my understanding of what clients really need from their agencies today and I am thrilled to be able to work with an amazing team to deliver this value.

■ ***With that in mind, what are you most excited about?***

I am excited to explore my own personal strength by being consistent, collaborative and measurable as a great leader and a colleague to everyone that I interact with.

■ ***Take us through some of the career highlights that you're particularly proud of.***

I have had an amazing journey with all the companies that I worked with and I am grateful for that. There are a few things that stand out for me and that makes me who I am today. I have never allowed titles or designations to dictate how or what I worked on, but rather passion and commitment to deliver outcomes. As such, being in the research, data and the insights space, I wanted to use reality and not surveys to make decisions.

On one occasion, this took me to the streets of Ghana where I walked with the people living there, sat with them and experienced their lives. I walked away with the ability to make decisions based on real-life and at the same time, I felt so humbled to be a woman of colour in Africa.

■ **List a few of challenges and opportunities for women (in your industry) that you've personally faced in your career.**

For me it has been two-fold, being a woman and a woman of colour. During my career, our industry has gone from not giving women and women of colour the leadership positions they deserved to today having a fair representation of diverse female leaders.



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The challenge for women of all races and walks of life in South Africa is to rise up and own who they are and what they can do because we come from such a complex past. And I believe that this is the opportunity, too. The opportunity for women to thrive even more and lead South Africa into the future!

■ **What did you do in order to overcome these challenges?**

I remained true to myself and my potential. I never allowed circumstances to define my journey and I always did the right thing.

■ **Do you have any female role models/women you look up to in the industry?**

Ferial Haffajee! Journalist, editor and outstanding leader in the country! She always speaks her mind, no matter what the consequence.

■ **As it is Women's Month, what is your advice or encouragement to other women in business?**

Don't let anyone else, except yourself, map out your journey and career. Remember: feedback is never criticism and always be open to garnering wisdom at every opportunity you get. After all, it's only wisdom that can make you great!

Connect with Naidoo on [LinkedIn](#), visit the [MediaCom SA press office page](#) and read through Naidoo's thought

leadership pieces by visiting her [MyBiz Profile](#).

ABOUT JUANITA PIENAAR

Juanita is the editor of the marketing & media portal on the Bizcommunity website. She is also a contributing writer.

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